

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Claimed and disclosed is a new use for a previously approved drug: erythropoietin. The present invention teaches using Erythropoietin to treat anemia caused by the combined treatment of Ribavirin and alpha-interferon. Erythropoietin has previously been approved for the treatment of anemia caused by cancer chemotherapy, renal failure and HIV. It has not been used for anemia caused by ribavirin. Ribavirin is part of a two-drug regimen now used to treat hepatitis C along with alpha interferon. The principal side effect of ribavirin is a hemolytic anemia. In the past, management of that anemia was done by dose reduction of the ribavirin, sometimes resulting in reversal of part of the anemia. It has become particularly important in light of new data, to maximize the dose of ribavirin given to persons undergoing treatment for hepatitis C to ensure a successful eradication of hepatitis C.

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